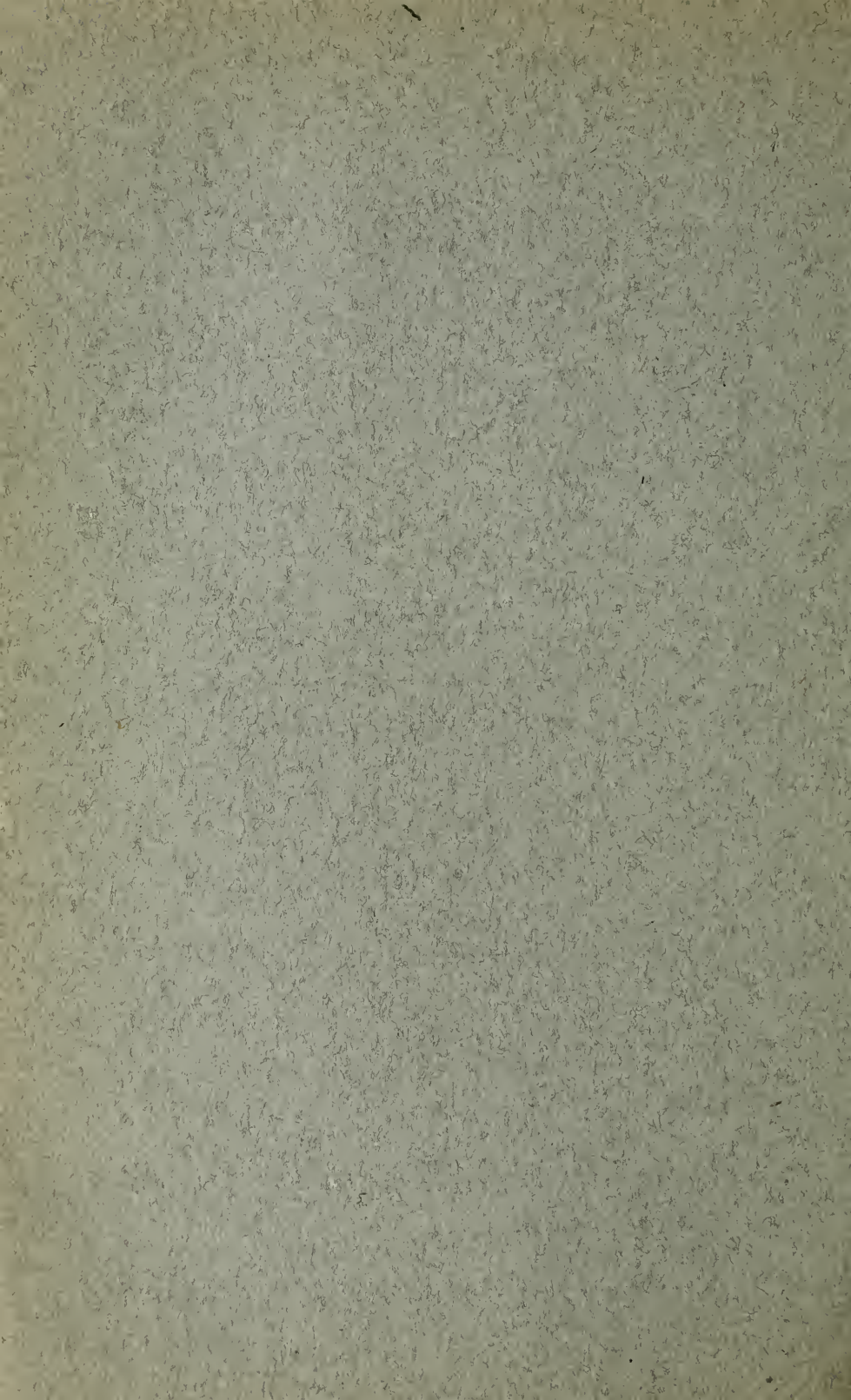


THE FOCUS



STATE NORMAL SCHOOL
FARMVILLE, VA.

JANUARY, 1914



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ROY MATHEWSON
Nothing Over Ten Cents



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THE FOCUS

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Child Labor in Virginia

Susan Minton

IN STUDYING the problem of Child Labor, we do not need to study conditions in England or even in any of our sister states. We have only to look at our own State, Virginia, as the oldest of the English colonies in America is rightly credited with originating many of the institutions of the New World, and to Virginia's credit—or shall we not say discredit—belongs the beginning of child labor in America. Even so early as 1619 we have an acknowledgment of the General Court of Virginia of one hundred children sent over from England, and in 1646 we read of the erection at Jamestown of two houses for the manufacture of linen. The different counties were “requested to send over poor boys and girls at least seven or eight years old to be instructed in the art of carding, knitting and spinning.” This industry did not flourish in Virginia, however, on account of its greater agricultural opportunities and until the development of her manufacturing industries and the growth of her cities in the last few decades, Virginia has been comparatively free from the curse of child labor.

Now Virginia has become a great manufacturing State, and it is in factory work that the children have been employed to their greatest physical injury. The forms of factory labor in which children are employed in Virginia are numerous. An investigation was made in 1908 by agents of the Federal Bureau of Labor, in those industries which were conspicuous for the employment of women and children throughout the nation. In Virginia, in the

four mills examined, it was found that fifteen per cent of the employees were children under sixteen years of age, and of these, a number were reported as being under twelve. Though the cotton mills have often put themselves forward as patrons of education, this has been proven false. Seventy per cent of the children under fourteen employed in the cotton mills were found to be illiterate.

Since this investigation was made, the amended Virginia law went into effect making an age limit of fourteen with an exception for children of dependent parents, who were allowed to go to work as early as twelve years. These children were employed in all kinds of mills, cotton, knitting, woolen, and silk mills, glass factories, shoe factories, cigar, cigarette and tobacco factories, and many other factories, including those for the manufacture of shirts, overalls, candy, boxes, furniture and trunks. In almost all of these factories, because of the enforcement of the Child Labor Law, the children universally said they were fourteen years of age. To all appearances, however, many of these children were employed under the age of fourteen. As many of the factories, however, do not employ children under the age limit, the passage of the law really has accomplished something.

But why should we need laws? Why should there be a child labor problem? Let us look for a few moments to the causes of child labor. In an investigation covering 3,297,819 wage earners, forty-six per cent. of the men earned ten dollars or less a week. It is simply impossible for a family of five to maintain a decent standard of living on an income of ten dollars a week; hence wives and children are compelled to participate in the fierce struggle for existence. Child labor is employed simply because it is cheap and unresisting. The school fails to hold the interest and attention of the average boy because the school training has so little relation to the world in which the average men and women are called upon to live. American children have suffered in so far as they have been put to premature toil because our commercial and industrial life has been so ruthless and so self-centered that it has never given them a thought. So we sum up the causes of child labor

under the following heads: Poverty, Employer's Policy, Condition of Schools, and Public Indifference.

Now we have considered the causes, let us notice the effects upon the children. We have already noticed the amount of illiteracy in mill-employed children, and we must see the dreadful physical effects that must be the natural result. Children are far more susceptible than adults to occupational diseases, such as tuberculosis, flat-foot, malformation, all kinds of poisoning, and the effects of toxin of fatigue. Hence the continuance of child labor in Virginia will result in the propagation of disease and the production of a large class of weak, defective and imbecile population for the future. What now can we do to remedy these conditions? We can do what one little orphan boy did. Five cents—his Christmas money and all he had was sent the National Child Labor Committee for the working children. A select school for young ladies gives an annual tea and dance for the benefit of the Child Labor Campaign. We can raise funds in this and similar ways. We can also use our influence in forming the laws so that soon Virginia, although the first to institute child labor, may also be the first to denounce it effectively and to abolish it.

How Long?

Mary Belle Frantz

THE WOODLAND stirred with the soul of spring
And the thrill of awakening life;
And a poplar tree grew slim and straight
Afar from the man-made strife,
And grew and grew in the fragrant air
And lifted its head toward the skies,
And gave from its boughs a grateful sound
Of woodland melodies.

A sturdy child came romping by,
And espying the slim, young tree,
Climbed upon it and bent it down,
And rode with a shout of glee,
'Til a voice stern ended his play,
Saying, "Youngster, get down, don't you see
You're bending down the young tree so
It will spoil its use for me?"
And afar in the city the whistles blew,
And shrieked their dire prophecy.

The meadow was soft with the velvety green
Of the tender new-born grass,
And a proud colt tossed his mane to the breeze,
And whinnied to see one pass,
Who looked on him with eyes of joy
And said to the child at his side:
"When you've worked your year in the mill, my boy,
The horse will be strong to ride";
But afar, 'mid the din of the grinding cogs,
A child laid him down and died.

Another spring sun smiled upon the earth
And shone on a winding road,
Where a strong young horse tossed his beautiful
head

And paced with his easy load.
The coffin was carved from poplar wood
And shook with each jolt of the cart.
But no pain stirred, or ever could,
To trouble the still little heart;
And afar in the city the millstone whirled,
And ground out its grim refrain,
And a pallid man crouched alone in the gloom
And counted his ghastly gain.

And darkness wrapped the countryside
With a clinging, shadowy shroud,
And the night wind wailed with a wild lament,
And snatched away the cloud
That covered the face of the waning moon:
And her ghost-light plainly shone,
And lit the gravestone, gleaming white,
Where a woman knelt alone;
And afar in the city the wheels rushed on,
With their terrible, tireless tone,
But above their tumult a mother's cry
Had reached the Father's throne.

Children on the Farm

I. A GENERAL VIEW

Pearl Tilson

PEOPLE DO NOT realize usually that children's work on the farm is often an injurious form of "child labor." It is true that the physical growth of children is not so hampered on the farm as in factories and public works, but how about their mental and spiritual being?

As Dr. Montessori said in her recent speech in America on the rearing of children, "a child's growth or development may be compared to that of a young tree, which, if constantly kept moving and being picked at, can make no growth."

The child, if constantly nagged at, and kept moving by different members of the household, is deprived of the best that is in life—freedom to grow naturally. A child must have freedom and, what many farmers think ridiculous, a day, or half-day, of leisure occasionally.

This applies to the boy in particular. At an early age he is put to work by the conscientious parents, who believe that if he isn't started out early in life he will be lazy and will never be of any account. At the age of ten or twelve he is expected to do the same work as a man of full growth.

Another dangerous idea stored up in the farmer's head is that the boys are young and do not get tired. The farmer comes in from the field at noon, sinks in his easy chair with a sigh that he is almost exhausted, and sends the little boys that have done the same or more work than he has, to feed the horses, or to do some little job which he forgot the day before, while he was talking politics to neighbor Jones across the fence. Then when the boy accomplishes this job and sits down on the back steps to rest until dinner, father calls out: "Son, have you finished your feeding? Did you patch the hole in the fence? Did you give the pigs any corn? Well, run get a bucket of water for your mother, then chop her a little stove-wood, for we may be late coming in tonight."

We do not realize that this is a form of "child labor"—but why isn't it? How could a boy develop with these drawbacks?

Much the same may be said of the girl on the farm. Many times the girls are made to do manual labor along with their father, brothers and the hired help. Farmers think that "women-folks," as they call them, should do all their house-work, which very often includes getting wood, feeding the chickens and pigs, and caring for the dairy. Then they can come and help in the field the rest of the day. How could girls develop under such circumstances? Their only associates are the hired help or perhaps the next-door neighbor, and they have no time to read or study.

The children are kept from school until all the crops are gathered and stored away and the winter's supply of wood

is prepared. Then in the spring they are stopped from school to do the planting and prepare for another year's work. This usually applies to children from seven to sixteen years of age. The young people are then naturally on the lookout for an opportunity to leave home and seek the freedom and pleasures of which they have been deprived. And this accounts for much of the sorrow suffered by the father and mother in later years, when their boys and girls have gone from the farm to the cities and sought their freedom. Such cases actually exist on many farms today. If the farmer could only realize that he was once a boy and had had these same desires himself, and would give his children work according to their strength, and make them love the work, instead of being driven to it, there would be fewer boys and girls leaving the farm for the city. Not only that, there would be more noble men and women produced, for many of the greatest men the world has ever produced, came from the farm.

II. A TYPICAL CASE

Ellen Vaughan

AMONG the many phases of the child labor problem, not the least is the subject of child labor on the farm. Let us take for example the typical farm renter throughout Virginia.

He has rented a farm of about two-hundred and fifty acres, of moderately rich land, suitable for raising tobacco and corn. The contract has been signed stipulating that he shall furnish all tools and labor, and in return for rent of land shall give one-half of all products raised on the farm.

He has a wife—a poor, tired, overworked woman, old long before her time—and five children. John, the oldest, a boy of about eighteen years, tall, angular-looking, with sunken chest and bent-over shoulders. Henry, next, a lad of thirteen years, having large, sympathetic-looking eyes, and a deep, thoughtful expression. Then there is Mary, a girl of eleven; Tom, a mischievous boy of nine, and the baby, scarcely a year old.

Our story opens with the opening of the country school on a bright October morning. For weeks Henry had been looking forward to this day with fear and trembling. His dearest wish was to obtain an education. He seemed possessed with a desire to read and study in order to find out things. Last year at the first of March he had been forced to stop school in order to help plow the land for the tobacco crop. At this time his teacher had told him that if he would return to school at the opening of the session that she would allow him to enter the sixth grade. For as Henry was a smart boy, and applied himself well, she felt no hesitation about his being able to make the skip.

Early this Monday morning Henry was up and finishing all his chores before breakfast. He slipped upstairs to dress for school. All the while Henry was dressing he was saying over to himself: "Oh, suppose father doesn't let me go to school this morning! Do you reckon he will make me stay at home and work this time?" When Henry slipped into his seat at breakfast, his father looked up, growled and said:

"What are you so dressed up for? Do you think you are going off to school this morning, eh? Well, I reckon not, and all that low-ground corn still to be gotten up. Do you think me and John can do it all by ourselves? I reckon you had just as well run along and take those clothes off."

Henry's face had slowly grown red while his father was speaking, and as soon as he finished, he said quickly, "Oh, father, let me go to school this year. The teacher said that I could go up into the sixth grade if I would start to school on the first day."

"No," the father said, pushing back his chair from the table, "I don't reckon you can go to school today or tomorrow either. Wait until the winter-time comes, and all the crops are in; then maybe you can go for a spell."

When his father had left the room, Henry turned and looked pleadingly at his mother.

"Maw, can't you make him let me go?" he asked. "You ask him, and see what he says."

The mother rose slowly and left the room, muttering,

"'Tain't no use, Henry, but I will do it being as you are so struck on schooling."

"Richard," the mother said to her husband, as she followed him to the door, "let Henry go to school this year. I'll see if I can't get the house work-straight and come down and help you all a little about the corn."

"I don't know about this," Richard replied. "You had better take that extra time that you have got on your hands and make that dress for Mary instead of asking me for money to get old Mrs. Paget to make it." After finishing this speech, the father slouched out towards the barn.

"'Tain't no use, Henry," the mother said, "I reckon you had just as well go on to work."

"Henry," said John, as they were busily engaged in hitching up the wagon, "what makes you so dead-set on schooling? It don't take any learning to plant tobacco and hoe corn. I ain't never even learned to read and I can plow two horses as good as any man."

"Oh, John, you don't know," Henry replied. "I wanted to amount to something in life, but I reckon I had just as well give it all up. It doesn't seem that boys like myself have any right to a fair showing."

In the house the mother was trying to feed the baby while Mary was clearing away the breakfast table.

"Mary," the mother said, after thinking a few moments, "as long as Henry can't go to school today I reckon you had just as well stay here too, and cook dinner while I see if I can't pick the rest of those peas in the garden, before another rainy spell catches them."

"Yes'm," Mary answered, "and what about Tom? Is he going to school?"

"No," replied the mother, "it don't make no difference about him, he is such a little critter, he can just stay at home and mind the baby."

The Human Flowerets

Gertrude Welker



ITH a heritage of skies the bluest,
And plenty of keen, fresh air,
Spring up the human flowerets
Sent from the world of prayer.

By ruthless hands the fresh green leaves,
And the beautiful slender stems,
And the petals unfolding in innocence
More precious than any gems

Are torn away from their native earth,
And in darkness are hidden away—
Away from the skies that are theirs by birth,
Away from the light of day.

The low, clear whistle of the wind
Is only through memory known;
The beautiful clouds and the blue, blue sky,
Fade into the years that have flown.

The flower the bud had promised unfolds—
Its whiteness no longer there;
Blemished and tinged by the factory smoke,
It goes back to the world of prayer.

The Dreamers

Elizabeth Painter

THE MOON shone tenderly down on the Southern sea, making a path of light across the waves, changing the distant Vesuvius into a dark pearl, and blending the sea and sky so perfectly that it was impossible to tell where they met. The moonbeams danced among the roses, hid beneath the grapevine leaves, ventured into Victor Nicuola's room, and finally stole across his eyes. He sprang to his feet, and looked out.

"It's almost time for me to start!" he exclaimed, "but I hate to wake mother."

Just then his mother called him, and he hastily slipped into his few clothes. How excited he was! In a few more hours he would be on his way to America, the land which overflowed with money.

"Perhaps even next month I can tell mother that she must never work again," he thought. "Then I shall take lessons in painting, become a great artist, and mother will be so happy. It was kind of Filippo to send for me. When I am as great as Raphael he will be glad that he did." (Filippo was Victor's brother-in-law.)

At the door of his room the boy paused. A lump came into his throat and his eyes burned strangely. "This room will miss me. Why, I have never slept anywhere else!"

This realization smote him with shame that the room had had no place in his visions.

"I will buy this cottage and come back here to rest sometimes," he promised, with his hand on the latch, but the window drew him back and he took a farewell look at the beautiful scene outside. "I shall paint it some day just as it now looks," and Victor ran into the next room where breakfast was waiting.

"Why, mother!" he cried in amazement, for the table was set as if for company, and many of his favorite dishes greeted his eyes.

"You may not be here again for a long time, and I want to make your last moments as happy as possible," Mrs. Nicuola explained.

"Please don't say that, mother. I shall come back soon, and even before then I shall send for you."

"I can't leave Italy, son."

"But I shall need you when I begin to paint. No one can tell so well as you when my pictures are really good. You will come, won't you, mother?"

"Victor, you must eat more breakfast than that. Remember you have a long walk before you reach the ship."

"I have finished, and must go now."

Mrs. Nicuola watched the hopeful figure till it faded in the dim light. Then the tears, which, for his sake, she had kept back at parting, flowed freely.

"They have all gone," she sobbed. "First his father died. Then Mary married, and now Victor too has left me. He's only fifteen. Why did he have to go so soon?"

.

Many months later the moon shone down on quite a different scene. Rugged mountain peaks towered upward, overshadowing valleys whose wild beauty had long ago been marred. In the very places where laurel and rhododendron had once run riot, and the trailing arbutus had spread a delicate carpet, great black caverns now yawned, and the coal dust covered everything. And this was America, the land of dreams and of golden promise. The moonbeams did not play so much this morning, for they had nothing to play with, and they were longer in waking Victor. Nor did he arise so eagerly. A moonbeam stole across his face, and he murmured, "Mother." Once again he was in Italy, and loved scenes flitted before him, but instead of his mother's voice, for which in his dream he had listened so eagerly, a shrill whistle sounded and the none-too-gentle tones of Filippo called, "Victor!"

A feeling of desolation swept over him. How like the valley before his window he felt, for the gay visions which had once belonged to him were now choked by sordid reality.

When he had first reached the valley, and before he had realized what was happening, he had sworn that he was old enough to work in the mine itself, and, after a short term as breaker boy, had been sent there. At first his brother-in-law had deceived him into thinking that they would soon strike gold, and be rich, so he had worked hard, but at last he saw the deception. Victor hated the mine with all his soul, and longed for escape, but Filippo had made that impossible.

As he went to work on this particular morning he felt even more bitter toward the mine than usual. Like a great monster it seemed to say to the boy, "I have ruined the health of others, have choked their ambitions, have made them old before their time, have even killed some, and you shall not escape." The memory of his mother had always warded off thoughts of suicide, but was it not really better to die young than to become a mere machine? Had not his hands already been spoiled for painting? Would he ever see home again? The boy dropped his pick with a cry, "How long!"

Perhaps it was well that he did not hear the warning shout as a big rock started from the earth above his head, for the rock brought peace, freedom and light.

.

Once again the moon shone tenderly down on the Southern sea and Vesuvius. This time it was evening and Mrs. Nicuola was happy, for she had received a letter from America.

"Now that my work is done, I shall find some one to read it to me. Perhaps Victor is sending for me. I once said that I would not go, but I will. He needs me. After he has finished his education, we shall come back to Italy," and she smiled happily.

Child Labor Among the Negroes

Madeline Warburton

“**LET HIM WORK.** It will do him good. He is nothing but a negro.” This is what people seem to say as they carry on the great campaign against child labor. In this campaign, the negro child is rarely ever mentioned. In fact, in the reading I have done, and the talks I have heard on the subject, never have I seen or heard a reference to the negro child. Why is it? Do we consider him merely as an animal, or do we pass him by without a thought at all?

This fight for the children should not be restricted to the white children alone. The negro is a human being, and something should be done for him as well. We know that child labor, as it now exists, is detrimental to mental, physical, and moral development. As we think of this, the white child only is brought to our minds. We seem to forget that the negro has a mind, we forget that he has a body; and we seem to overlook the fact entirely that he has a soul.

The negro children may not work in the mines and factories to so great an extent as the white children, but they do work, and many of them very hard, and they are put to work at even more tender ages than are the whites. By the time the little girls are six or seven years old they are required to mind their younger brothers and sisters, of which there are usually a great number. Or, they are hired out to white people to do odd jobs and run errands. You may be sure these white employers never fail to find errands for them to run. “No,” they say, “we pay them for it, and cannot afford to let them be idle.” So the little hired-out negro runs from one thing to another all day long.

In the country it is not an uncommon sight to see negro boys—and girls too, sometimes—eleven, twelve, or thirteen years old out in the fields working side by side with their parents, doing the same work, and working

the same number of hours. I have seen them in the fodder fields, working ten hours a day and keeping up with the men all the time.

In the lumbering communities the boys are put to work as soon as they are big enough to handle a saw and an ax. This is about at the ages of eleven and twelve. They work in the woods all day, sawing down the trees, and cutting them into the required lengths. The more children the father has at work, the more logs he can get out. The more logs he gets cut, the more money he receives. Of course, he puts every child to work that he possibly can. At this work the back soon becomes bent and deformed, the shoulders become rounded, and the entire growth is stunted.

One of the most inhumane things about this negro child labor is that the children are not half fed. I have seen them stagger from weakness as they came from work. They had worked all day on a very light breakfast and a scant lunch. If the employers feed them it means a reduction in their daily wages. Their parents had rather that they live on only the small amount that can be afforded them at home than that the wages be lowered.

Of course the negro children's work is not always heavy, but it robs them of their childhood and education, to which every child has an undisputed right.

The negro is ignorant and we seem content to let him remain so. If we stopped to think what evils inevitably follow this ignorance, perhaps we would not be so contented. Disease and crime, the greatest drawbacks to the welfare and progress of our State, are really the products of ignorance.

Disease breeds and is found most frequently among the ignorant negroes. They have never had the opportunity to learn the importance of fighting disease, nor how to do it. As children they were sent to work rather than to school. Because they do not know how to prevent the spread of contagious diseases, the diseases are carried from family to family and finally to the whites, causing death after death. The negro is not to blame; for he knows no better. If he knew these things he would join

the fight against disease and be a help rather than a hindrance to the welfare of the state.

The greatest amount of crime is also found among the negroes. The children are put to work and kept out of the few schools that are provided for them. Many of them never see inside a school. Their minds are not developed and they are not able to discriminate between right and wrong. They are taught to do things they should not do. They see others do wrong and seemingly profit by it. Consequently they go and do likewise, not realizing that they are doing wrong. For people, who are not capable of deciding for themselves, usually do what they are taught to do.

The negro makes up a very great percentage of the population of Virginia. Therefore by letting him grow up in work and ignorance, rather than in school and education, we lower the standard of the State in many ways. We increase the percentage of illiteracy; we increase the death rate; and increase the number of crimes.

It is up to us, the white people of the state, to see that schools are provided for the negro as well as the white child; and to see that he is taken from work and sent to these schools. Not until a fight is made against negro child labor, not until better schools are provided for the negro child, not until the negro child is educated will the child labor problem of Virginia be solved.

If we would advance our State we must advance the negro as well as the white child. But, leaving out what the education and advancement of the negro means to the State, we owe it to ourselves and to the negro as a human being to do this. Let the fight against child labor go on and on until it wins victory after victory for the child; but let it be in behalf of the negro child as well as the white.

The Realization

Grace Welker

THE FACTORY WHISTLE blew and out poured the human stream of children—hurrying, pushing, screaming, glad to be released—the sense of the noise, the gloom, their nerve-racking occupation, seeming to slip off their young shoulders as soon as they had emerged from the shadow of the factory door.

James Lane watched them from his office window. He could not see anything the matter with them. They reminded him of so many unharnessed colts. He did not understand why the child labor agitators should have raised such a commotion over young children working in factories. He could get along without the children provided he raised his wages—but it had always seemed useless to employ adults for work that children could do just as well—and then, they needed the money. He knew that all of them did not have parents able to support them.

He was still thinking as he stepped into his car and rode homeward. He wanted to do the right thing. He had two children himself. But somehow he could not see anything vitally wrong with child labor. It was not the best thing in the world, of course, but then—

His car stopped and when he saw his children run down the steps to meet him all thought vanished but thought of them. He remembered how, five years ago, his wife had left them to his charge and then he thought of how much they were to him—of how much they would have meant to her if she had lived.

The children always stayed with him until their bed time and after they had gone he read the paper or went to the club. But this night he sat before the fire brooding, brooding. He put another coal on the fire and watched it as it blazed up and then fell with a soft thud into the glowing bed of coals. Somehow he was very lonely. If

only his wife had not died. She would have advised him when he knew not what to do. It seemed as if there was nobody now.

At length his head fell back on his chair and then—surely there was a mistake—no—he was back in his office again, watching the children come from his factory. They came out as before, hurrying, pushing, screaming, but this time—why was it?—his eyes did not pass over them all carelessly. They fell on two of the children, moving along in the crowd. The children glanced up and—ah, it could not be! yes—they were his own, and on their faces was an almost imperceptible veil of age and sorrow beyond their years. He wondered why he had not noticed it on the other children and then, quite suddenly, he knew. It was, because he had not been looking through eyes made strong by love.

The children disappeared in the crowd and he seemed bound hand and foot—powerless to aid them.

He thought of the sky—the sea—the long stretch of sandy shore where he had meant that they pass their summer. It was their birthright—theirs along with the other children, and he had taken it from them. The realization stunned him. He had not known what it meant to the parents of the children he had kept shut up in his factory—away from the fresh air, the sunlight—what it meant to the children themselves.

And now that he knew, it was of no avail. His children were gone—the children that she had left in his charge. A sigh, so deep it was a sob shook his frame and then—he opened his eyes. He was sitting by the fire, which had almost gone out.

He was dazed for a moment. He could not understand, and then—he understood. It had been a dream—but not one of those dreams which fade away into shadowy vapor on awakening—ah, no—a dream that had made him see as he never otherwise would have seen.

To Judge Ben Barr Lindsey

R. J. M.

YOU, JUSTICE'S SELF, with all-impartial sword
Summoned curtly forth to judgment hall
Accused of egoism: An awful pall
Enshrouding your high soul with gloom, dark
lowered.
Was this the harvest of your years outpoured?
Were human hearts like wormwood in recall?
Your heart said, "No," and patient through it all
You worked and loved and thanklessness ignored.
And now you stand absolved! Your bitterest foe
In your full, noble life found no misdeed:
You merely loved the children deep and strong,
Your motto, "Inasmuch;"—and this we know,
That in your heart so filled with children's need
There can no place be left for any wrong.

"Compulsory Education Will Not Cure It"

Elizabeth Gildea

IN SUMMING up the reasons why children work, Thomas Oliver has said, "Child labor was fostered by the ignorance of the working people, by paternal greed and poverty, and encouraged by employers."

These reasons are very far-reaching, and since the disease of child labor, if it may be so called, has similar sources in all countries they are applicable to Virginia.

There are scores of questions which arise in connection with this much studied, much thought of, and overwhelming evil. Among them are these: Is there any panacea for it? and, what future is it making for America?

There are many truly great men and women who have given and are still giving up their entire time and lives to the solution of this great problem which is staring us in the face. Some advocate compulsory education as a means of doing away with this great evil, and lowering the percentage of illiteracy.

From my study of the situation I cannot see the many benefits which will be derived from compulsory education laws, provided the school system remains the same. True enough, the children will get a great deal which will make them better citizens, to enable them to make a better living in some cases; but, what is going to be done for those who have to work to earn bread for the whole family? Where will they get food to sustain them through the day, and clothes to keep them warm? The compulsory education laws will certainly not supply these. Statistics as well as inspectors' reports show that the girls and boys of the child laborer type resent charity. They wish to be self-supporting and independent. In hundreds of cases when the children have been asked if their father were living and able to support them would they want to go to school, the answer has been invariably, "No;" and why? Be-

cause the schools of today do not meet the needs of the child.

Some great educator has said that the human race could be divided into two classes, namely, abstract thinkers and concrete thinkers. Unfortunately the schools have recognized only the first class and consequently the concrete thinkers fail to respond to the stimuli presented by the average school. The children of the latter type find practically nothing of any real value to them in the school life they have to lead. They soon become aware of the fact that they cannot keep up with their classmates and that they are really unable to enter into the work except in a mechanical way, if at all. What is the result? They seek occupation in the factories, in the mills, on the farms, where they are on equal footing with other children and can enter into the work, deriving benefit from it, materially if not intellectually. They find that their physical being demands something which the school does not supply; and naturally they seek it elsewhere.

Are not the children who earn a little to add to the needs and comforts of everyday life really better off than those who are compelled to go to school hungry and without sufficient clothing to keep them warm? Have we any right to force a special kind of education upon a child who is not fitted either physically or mentally to take it? We would not think of forcing a boy who showed special aptitude for law to take up carpentry. Neither should we think of compelling a boy who has special talent for mechanics to throw his time and life away studying philosophy.

It seems to me that there must be something more than compulsory education to solve this great problem for Virginia. The general school system will have to be changed and vocational schools established—vocational schools on what is called a "part-time" basis; in which the child may go to school part of the day to get the essentials of education, at the same time making his living by working the rest of the day. When this is done I believe the children will want to go to school, and compulsory education laws will be unnecessary. I do not mean to say

that all of the children will flock to the schools at once; for that would be too nearly ideal. But I do believe that in the majority of cases the question of getting children to attend school will be practically solved when vocational schools for the public are established.

Still the question arises: What about the home conditions of these children who have to toil daily for an existence? I believe that the real panacea will come in removing the cause. Improve the conditions of the homes of these most unfortunate ones. The boards of health will have to wake up to their duties and see that the children are allowed to live under sanitary conditions; thus preventing and eradicating diseases; for poverty often follows an epidemic of disease. The boards of charities will also have to get busy and locate the sick and disabled, making sure that they are cared for in the proper way. If this is done, many sick and disabled fathers and mothers, as well as children, will be restored to health and strength, thereby enabling the parents to provide for their families and giving the children an opportunity to attend school.

To do this will mean a great deal of work and time, but the future of America demands it, and since the condition exists we must face it, leaving no stone unturned until Child Labor becomes a thing of the past.

The Victims

Emma W. White

NOW BROAD they stretch across the skies!
These mighty giants of commerce rise,
A million brick on brick are piled,
And many a yard and many a mile
Of floor and hall is compassed within,
And noises of man with engine blend

In one great roar! How mighty the plan
Of this great work conceived by man.
Within the engines throb and shriek,
And monster tanks with great sweat reek,
Leathern belts are flying past,
Gigantic wheels are whirling fast.

In this powerful spidery caul
People seem to be enthralled.
What a tangled, intricate maze
Are all these aisles and numerous ways.
A roar is heard from motor and wheel,
The clanking iron and clashing steel.

And now we pass from the heavy gloom
Of basement to the spinning room.
Here workers busily are plying
Their quick and skilled fingers, tying
Each strand that breaks the line,
And starts the spool that ceased to wind.

Here are adults both young and old,
But alas! when truth is told,
Children too with drugging toil
Are caught within their merciless coil
Of wringing work and care—
Children, worn, pale and spare.

Infants merely, when they came,
Now bowed and bent with toil's strain,
Withered and furrowed as with time,
Robbed lives that never will reach their prime,
Old men and women they have grown,
From labor's weights that they have borne.

Oh God, how long must this crime stain
Our land, and tender youth be maimed,
And in the shackles of toil be bound,
By inventions their own fathers found?
How long must these forms like Thine
Be sacrificed to the Greed of Mankind?

The New Year

Gertrude Welker

"**I**S IT almost time?" asked the little New Year, as he stood looking over the edge of the purple and gold cloud down through the misty, starry night.

"No, my child," Father Time said gently, as he gazed at the tiny figure with sorrowful eyes, "it is not yet time to go. You must wait for the Old Year to come in. He will be very tired tonight," he added sadly, half to himself, "very tired—poor Old Year."

The little New Year stopped gazing through the heavens, and turned toward Father Time. Father Time had looked so sad lately—he did not understand. Why were his eyes so cast down, why was his back so bent, and why was his voice so sad? It was all so strange—he didn't see how anyone could be unhappy.

"Why do you talk so sadly, Father Time?" said the little New Year, wonderingly. "I intend everyone on earth to be happy while I am there."

But Father Time said nothing. He was thinking of those others who had started out with the same bright hopes, and he sighed as he thought of how his children had come back to him.

"He is coming, he is coming!" shouted the little New Year, suddenly, and in his hurry almost floated off the purple and gold cloud; "but he is coming so slowly," he cried impatiently, as he watched the approaching Old Year. Slowly up the great Milky Way he came, leaning heavily on each friendly star, and helped along by each passing cloud. Father Time went to meet the newcomer, and as he looked from the tired, haggard face of the Old Year to the bright, hopeful one of little 1914, he stifled a sigh that would come.

"Oh, he is almost here!" cried the little New Year, and as the Old Year placed one tired foot on the purple cloud, Father Time saw the New Year speeding down through

the frosty night to the world, where he would be as eagerly welcomed, and so soon forgotten. And as he tenderly greeted the tired Old Year, he heard the silvery voice calling back to him through the mist and darkness:

“Good-by, Father Time, everyone will be happy while I am there. I will make them so happy, so happy—”

And as Father Time watched the tiny figure fade among the stars, he lost one sweep of his scythe as he wiped away a tear.

“Good-by, little New Year,” he answered softly, “my own little one; you will come back to me, and I will comfort you.



Sketches



MORNING

Dull gray! and a sip of bad coffee—
The dawn of a November day,
A noon lunch in a newspaper,
And a rush to the mill away.

NOON

A quick, loud shriek of a whistle,
A lull in machinery's din—
A nervous half-hour, spent in waiting,
A rush again work to begin.

NIGHT

Dull gray! Then afar 'neath the star glow
A walk 'mid the people and cars,
A little head bent toward the pavement,
That knows not to look for the stars.

R. J. M.

A MONOLOGUE IN AN ART GALLERY

"Oh, my dear Kate, I'm delighted; who would ever have thought of meeting you here? How well you're looking!

"The pictures? Why, of course, I always come on opening day. One sees the best people and the swellest gowns. I'll never forget the gown Mrs. Brown wore last autumn. You never saw a gown so stunning. It was cut princess—The pictures? Oh, yes, of course, we look at the pictures, but they really are not of the first importance to the smart set, you know. They rather come to see others and to be seen. The artists usually serve tea from four to five, and then the most distinguished of the elite may

be seen. I always try to get here about that time. It's worth a great deal to be seen in such a gathering of celebrities, although few of them respond to my bows as yet. It's only a question of time, however, before we shall all be on speaking terms, for I mean to continue to bow and smile until they return my salutations.

"It's a little early yet, but if you stay until the tea hour you will be more than repaid. How's that? You came to see the pictures and not the people? But, my dear, just think what a waste of time. You can see pictures any time, but such people! Why, they have their names in the paper at least once a week. Oh, yes, I can tell you a lot about the pictures. I always read up on them and I'll be glad to give you the benefit of my careful study. Let's get a catalogue."

"I think we had better pass over all these old masters, they are simply horrible! I never could see how a Madonna could be regarded as a work of priceless art.

"Well, it didn't take us long to get through with Raphael, Lippi and Rosa Bonheur, did it? But this section is almost as bad. They are the smeary landscapes in which nothing is clear but seems enveloped in fog.

"There's Mrs. Gray talking to Jack Philipps. They're both artists. Isn't she swell? Her husband is suing for a divorce and I don't blame him. She's a wretched artist. She paints long-necked women with sallow faces and short waists like yours. She may learn to paint some day, but she lacks style at present.

"Oh, there's Mary Jones. I don't want her to see me, she's so utterly impossible and she hangs on so. If any of my swell acquaintances should see me with her I know it would set me back dreadfully, for she is in no sense of the word aristocratic looking. Oh, with you it's quite different. You might be mistaken for an artist; all of them are decidedly careless as to appearance and you really have an intelligent face.

"She's coming straight toward us and we simply can't avoid her. What shall we do? Let's turn our backs and pretend we are very much absorbed in the landscape. Is that her just back of us now? Peep just a tiny bit and see.

It is? Has she detected my personality or is her silence due to the fact that she is shocked at beholding for the first time a dress that really fits in the back? Well, we're discovered and we may as well make the best of it. Oh, Mary, you dear, how are you. I've been hungry to see you. Why in the world don't you come to see me sometimes? You simply avoid me; it's a shame—yes, aren't they lovely? Kate and I have been so uplifted by them. Half after three? My, I really must be going. No, Kate, I won't stay to tea. Can't you come part of the way home with me? You will? Why, how sweet of you, Mary, to decide to go home to tea with me! You may as well come too, Kate, it will be so much more comfortable than this public place, and Mr. Jones will be so pleased, for he's been working hard of late and declared he is to spend a quiet evening at home, and I know he'll enjoy hearing our bright gossip. Now, don't make excuses but come for his sake.

—*Frances Goldman.*

MY FAVORITE NOOK

When there were either problems to solve, decisions to make, or questions to ponder, I used to flee to my favorite nook, which was under the shade of a large balsam tree. This tree stands on the edge of the lawn, near the public road. I have spent some of the most pleasant hours there, because I was alone with Nature, which seemed to give me the best inspiration about things I wanted to know. From this nook there is a splendid view of the Blue Ridge mountains extending across the western horizon in their greatest beauty. Down behind the ranges I used to watch the great sun sink at such a rapid rate that I could imagine it falling down and down until it reached a place from which it should never return. The birds sang the sweetest and the grass grew the greenest here in my favorite nook.

Mae Cox.

THE RECOMPENSE

He had begged mother half an hour for a nickel.

"Why?" she asked as she bent over the wash tub. "You know mother hasn't much money."

"But I do want it so bad," he insisted. "Please, mother, some day I'll pay you back."

"Well, here it is," and she counted out five pennies. "Run along now, I must get these clothes out before dinner."

Quickly he ran bareheaded down the street to Hunter's book store.

"Five cents' worth of paper to draw pictures on, please," he said to the girl who met him. She wore a small, black satteen apron and looked tired.

With the precious bundle he hurried home. On the floor on the back porch he laid the paper. There he spent the rest of the morning working with a piece of red crayon he had picked up near the high school. The result was a street car, a steamboat, (he had seen one the day before), a train with cars, and an automobile.

So happy was he in the creative joy of his work he did not hear the dinner bell. When mother called, he went down into the basement, taking his pictures to show her. She was cutting bread—her sleeves still rolled up and tired lines in her face.

"Oh, mother, look what I've made!" he cried.

She paused a moment, gazed at the drawing and then at his animated face—and there she saw the flame.

The tired lines left her face. She dropped the bread knife—put her arms around the child—and kissed his shining blue eyes.

The nickel had been paid back.

R. J. M.



At the beginning of this new year we want to extend our best wishes to all of our exchanges. May the year hold success and prosperity in store for all of you.

In examining the college and school magazines this month we have given particular attention to the editorial departments, and shall try to give our exchanges the benefit of our observations.

There are several editorials in *The Missile* which tell of matters of interest to the student body alone, and there is one which is of equal interest to all, on the spirit of Christmas. The thought in a part of it is good, but the author is not consistent. She says that the true spirit of Christmas is giving for the happiness of others, but we are surprised at the illustration that follows: "Few of us can remember definitely the gifts we received as youngsters, but none of us ever forget the celebration of Christmas in our own childhood days; the heaps of pop corn, the odor of fruit cake, and the breathless excitement that was crowded into those few wonderful days before Christmas." This does not prove her point, that "happiness lies in making others happy." The heaps of pop corn

and the fruit cake were to be enjoyed by ourselves, therefore the illustration fails to carry out her idea.

This editorial is not original in thought. It repeats the advice we have heard many, many times, but if we would earnestly try to follow it we would indeed reap the reward of happiness.

The first two editorials in *The Student* seem to belong among the news items at first glance, but upon further consideration we find the first one, at least, worthy of a place in the editorial department.

It tells of a prize, consisting of a set of books, valued at ten dollars, which has been offered by Trinity College to the senior who makes the highest average in scholarship during the session 1913-14. This prize is quite an honor to the school for it is awarded because of the good work done by one of its graduates. Surely it should inspire each senior to do his best work.

The last editorial is probably the best. It is a strong appeal for a new high school building. The editor's argument is very forceful, and we hope they will be successful in securing the new building.

The editorial in the November issue of the *Sweetbriar Magazine* is very good. "College Spirit," the title of the editorial, is an interesting subject. The manner of treating the subject, however, might be more interesting and striking.

It does our hearts good to read the editorials in the November issue of *The Firing Line*. We often sigh when reading the editorials because of the tendency to vagueness and to rambling into theories instead of getting down to the practical sides of the subject. The editorials in *The Firing Line* are useful. There is no vague theorizing on hackneyed subjects. They treat of subjects of interest and of importance in school affairs and make a direct appeal to the students themselves.

We should like to see some discussion of the problems which must come up in the use of the honor system. Per-

haps the editor is applying the theory of suggesting moral ideas rather than emphasizing the don'ts. If so then good luck to him! He is quite right.

The editorial entitled "College Spirit vs. Secret Societies" goes straight to the point. There is no mistaking its sincerity and practical man to man appeal. There is no beating around the bush in this. It is with honest relief we read these editorials after wandering in the mazes of tangled ideas which seem to attract so many misguided editors. Come down to earth occasionally and try to help others to see the vision and solve the puzzles.

In addition to the above mentioned magazines, we gratefully acknowledge the following exchanges: *The Southern Collegian*, *The Furman Echo*, *The Oracle*, *The Critic*, *Southwestern University Magazine*, *The Chisel*, *The Hollins Magazine*, *The College Messenger*, *Gallowegian*, *The State Normal Magazine*, *The Randolph-Macon Monthly*, *The Record*, *St. Mary's Muse*, *The Narrator*.

THE FOCUS

VOL. III FARMVILLE, VA., JANUARY, 1914 NO. 9

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Sworn to and subscribed before me this 2nd day of October, 1912.

J. L. Bugg, Notary Public.

Entered as second-class matter at the postoffice at Farmville, Virginia.

Editorial

This number of *The Focus* has been devoted chiefly to Child Labor, because of the Ruffner-

Introduction Jefferson prize of ten dollars which is to be given for the best essay, poem or story written on Child Labor conditions in Virginia—one of the conditions being that the article be published in *The Focus*. The debating societies have had Child Labor as their subject for study this term.

* * *

Child Labor! The subject is such a large one—the field so broad—the remedies seemingly so

What the hard to obtain, that we—girls here in the
School Normal School—lack interest and feel that
Can Do there is nothing we can do. But we should have interest and there is something we can

do. We are preparing ourselves to be teachers. We are going out all over the State, and if we are fully alive to the situation we can make others feel so. We can talk to parents—we can make them realize what child labor

in its worst aspects means by showing them conditions here in our own State.

The National Child Labor Committee has published any number of pamphlets which portray existing evils very clearly, and this literature will be supplied to anyone writing for information. Therefore there is no reason why we may not be fully informed on the subject.

Then there is the plan adopted by the debating societies—that of each member writing to the representative from the district in which she lives asking for his views on child labor, and asking that he do all in his power to have the legislature pass laws to remedy the evil. These letters will not be ignored, for all of our representatives are anxious to please people from their district—and also the wise representative will not ignore the letter of a person whose vote may—before many years have passed—send him again to the legislature.

Then, we, as future teachers, should be interested in Child Labor because it is one aspect of child life. We are interested vitally in children. We are studying how to develop each child to the fullest extent of his capabilities so that he can carry on the work of the race in the best way possible. And here are any number of these children shut up in factories and mines at the very time when their young lives should be developing and expanding.

We, as a class, should try to make other people interested and so interested that they too will realize that their co-operation will help in this great cause.

* * *

What is bluffing? Webster says, “to deceive or gain advantage over; to deceive by an assumed possession of knowledge.” Is this what bluffing has come to mean in our school? Is it really deceitfulness when, if we have not prepared the lesson assigned, and a question comes up for discussion in class, we give our opinions and views of the subject without being influenced or prejudiced by those in the book? If “deceitfulness” is what “bluffing” means I think we have named this method of lesson recitation without previous preparation wrongly. If the knowledge we use in answering

a question is not *assumed* knowledge and if we really want to express our views I think we are justified in doing so, and if this is deceiving the teacher into thinking we have prepared the lesson, surely this was not our intention. It isn't the fact that you have studied the lesson that the teacher wants; it is the grasp you have of the ideas and thoughts brought out in the lesson, and you may have your own opinion of these without being influenced by the author. In this way, I think, provided we do not attempt to deceive the teacher in regard to our preparation we are justified in using this so-called "bluffing."

But in another sense it is not a good plan to use even this sort of "bluffing" as a means of lesson recitation. We begin to rely too much on it—we think we need not study when "bluffing" is such an easy substitute. The next step is to confuse getting along well in class work with "bluffing," and so there arises a dangerous obscuring of the real purposes of school life. But our books give us the facts that we need to know in order to become teachers and though we may not agree with the text-books in many things, the facts given there are solid foundations on which to build up our own opinions. Let us build our houses not on the sand, but on the solid rock, lest they be washed away.

* * *

There is always regret at the end of the old year—regret that we have not accomplished all that we would have liked to do. And so we—who will be spoken of as "the old staff" after the coming election—feel at the end of our year's work on *The Focus*. We regret that we could not have done more for the magazine whose interest we have had at heart.

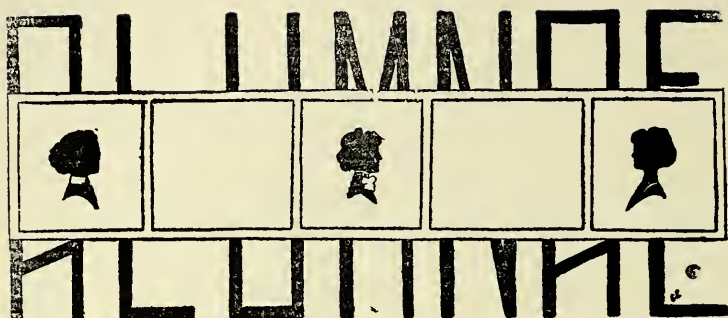
But along with this feeling there is the glad knowledge of the new year and the new staff—the new year which we hope will bring *The Focus* all that we would have liked to give it, and the new staff who, having behind them the reserve of strength and hope that the new year brings, will be eager to devote their energies to it.

So we welcome you—new staff-to-be—and hope that you will enjoy the work as much as we have. Of course there

have been difficulties—there have been days when we have felt that the mere mention of *The Focus* would cause our already wearied brains to rebel. We have felt like our business manager when she tries to get subscriptions to *The Focus*, and meets with the latter two of her classes of girls, for she says, “There are three types: Those who will subscribe at first bidding, those who will take it after an hour or two’s persistent pleading, and those who will not take it under any circumstances.”

But, after all, these times are merely the few weeds in the great field of experience thrown open to us, and we hope that the new staff will find only the flowers, which loom up, particularly large and beautiful so that they quite overshadow the weeds—when we look back over the field on leaving and realize that we have done little for *The Focus* compared to what *The Focus* has done for us.

THE EDITORS.



Therese Johnson, '12, took a special course in High School English at Columbia University the past summer. She is now teaching at Beaver Dam, Va.

We think you will be interested in knowing where last years' graduates are teaching and we hope to publish in our next issue the names of those that do not appear among the following:

Margaret Boatwright is teaching at Covington, Va.

Fletcher Bailey is teaching at Tom's Creek.

Florence Williamson is teaching at Crabbottom.

Willie Smith and Etta Bailey are teaching at Beaver Dam.

Margaret Garnet is teaching in Fauquier County, Va.

Ella Pope did not teach during the fall term, but since Christmas has been teaching in Richmond.

Antoinette Davis is teaching at Lynchburg, Va.

Natalie Terry is teaching Normal Training at Abingdon, Va.

Clara Nye is teaching at Radford, Va.

Lillian Burton is teaching at Mascot, Va.

Annie Cheatham is teaching at Glade Hill, Va.

Wanda Harkrader is teaching in a kindergarten in Roanoke, Va.

Mary Ware Weiser is teaching at Rural Retreat, Va.

Alice Martin is teaching in Ashland, Va.

Annie Seymore is teaching at La Crosse, Va.

Fannie and Mary Sterling Smith are both teaching at Wakefield, Va.

Jennie Martin is teaching at Dendron, Va.

Maria Gregory is teaching at Grundy, Va.

Hallie Rodes is teaching at Roseland, Va.

Frances Andrews is teaching at Emporia, Va.

Willie Guthrie is teaching at Beaver Dam.

Virginia Wilson is teaching at Clover.

Julia Rollins is teaching at Marion.

Evelyn Hurff is teaching at Wakefield.

Ruth Fulton is teaching at Elk Creek, Va.

Minnie Butler is teaching at Arvonnia, Va.

Elsie Mildred Stull is not teaching this year.

Josephine Burnett is teaching at Unionville, Va.

Lucy Williams is teaching at Brookneal.

Blanche Burks is teaching at Pamplin.

Kathleen Barnett is not teaching this year.

Margaret Godby is teaching at Hiwassee.

Martha James is teaching at Rocky Mount, N. C.

Annette Liebman is teaching in Norfolk, Va.

Margaret Lee Upchurch is teaching at Big Stone Gap.

Bertha Hunt is teaching at Poguossan, Va.

Frances Graham is not teaching this year.

Laura Lee Castleman is teaching at Stanardsville, Va.

Kathleen Fore is teaching at Pamplin, Va.

Lillian Rice is teaching at Rural Retreat.

Rubye Keith is teaching in Botetourt, Va.

Wallace Moir is teaching at Stuart, Va.

Olive Foster is teaching in Henrico County.

Kerah Cole is also teaching in Henrico County.

The letter given below was written by a member of the class of 1913, and should be of interest to present students as giving a glimpse of the future.

Coeburn, Va., Jan. 11, 1914.

My dear Miss Mix:

If you have any more of those circulars like those you gave us last year ("The Necessity of the Kindergarten

in the Public School System,"I think is the way it is worded) will you please send me about two?

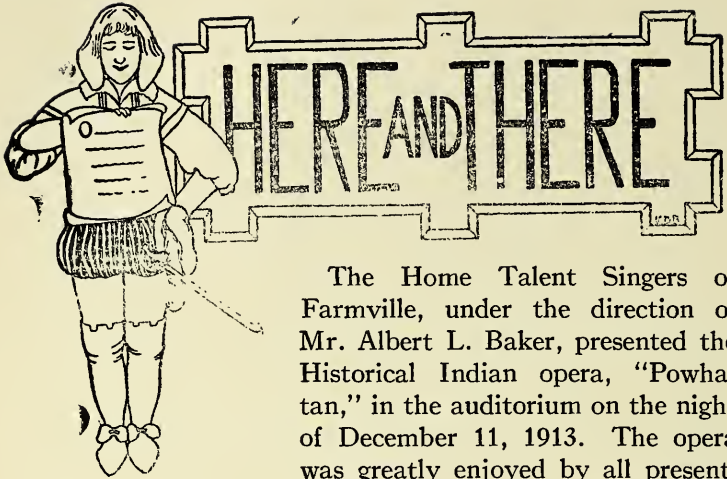
This is comparatively a new country and most of the people don't even know the meaning of a kindergarten. I think kindergartens out here would do more good than anywhere else I know of. This is a very wealthy country and the people do not mind the expense. It is just that they do not know.

I teach the primary class in a mining camp. It is different from anything I was ever used to, but I rather like it. Most of the children are Hungarians or Italians and I had a time with them at first, but now we understand each other better in every way. We have only half day sessions. I have about eighty pupils on the roll, which makes about forty in the morning and the same number for the afternoon.

Last winter when I thought I was having such a hard time, I never dreamed of the difficulties and problems that were before me. I wish I could have taught before ever going to school, then I'm sure I would have gotten better results. Everything is so entirely different from what it is there that you can term both school, and that is all. If you have ever taught foreigners, I guess you know some of my difficulties. I thought I never would learn their names, and until I learned their names my discipline was not what should have been desired. Then I find that they are extremely bright, or very extremely dull. There doesn't seem to be any medium line with them in anything. Then they are stubborn, sulky, and everything else bad you can think of. I'm having the time of my life. I wish I was back at school, which is a bed of roses compared to this.

Remember me to Miss Johnson.

Lovingly,



The Home Talent Singers of Farmville, under the direction of Mr. Albert L. Baker, presented the Historical Indian opera, "Powhatan," in the auditorium on the night of December 11, 1913. The opera was greatly enjoyed by all present.

The sixth grade of the Training School dramatized the "Courtship of Miles Standish" on the night of December 5, 1913. The cast of characters was as follows:

Miles Standish	Jake Schell
John Alden	Jack Wilkerson
Priscilla	Irene Anderson
Elder and Messenger.....	Elbert Myers
Councilman	Rodney Vaiden
Indian	Eugene Barda
Other Pilgrims: Margaret Steger, Virginia Atkinson,	
Anna Bullock, Johnella Foster, Daphne Gilliam, Maude	
Hackett, Lucy Irving, Jake Schell, Dorothy Wells, Dallas	
Dahl, Mary Garland, Martha Hart, Bernice Krebs, Mary	
Rice, Alma Tatum, Scott Hart, James Hillsman, Walter	
Putney, Marion Hardy, Melvin McFarland.	

A very enjoyable musical program was given in the auditorium, December 18, under the direction of Miss Munoz, the musical instructor. All the grades of the Training School as well as the Junior and third year classes, Glee Club, and German Club took part in the rendering of the appropriate Christmas songs and dramatizations.

As the third number of the series of Star Course entertainments the Schumann Quintette rendered a classical instrumental program which was appreciated by all those present.

The Athenian Literary Society held its regular annual business meeting on January 16, and the following officers were elected:

Virginia Field.....	President
Virgie Fuller	Vice-President
Alma Thomas.....	Recording Secretary
George Bailey	Corresponding Secretary
Mary Bell	Treasurer
Bessie Bucher.....	Critic
Elise Leckie	Censor
Annie Leigh	Reporter

The following were elected officers of the Ruffner Debating Society for the spring term:

Elizabeth Gildea	President
Susan Minton	Vice-President
Adelaide Storm	Recording Secretary
Virginia Watkins	Treasurer
Grace Welker	Critic
Madeline Warburton	Reporter

On the night of December 15, the Jefferson Debating Society elected the following officers:

Belva Potter	President
Constance Rumbough	Vice-President
Elizabeth Painter	Corresponding Secretary
Ira McAlpin	Recording Secretary
Martha Bill	Treasurer
Annie Banks	Critic
Caralyn Pope	Reporter

"A cause that will call together over three thousands men and women, students, professors and friends from every part of the United States and Canada, in the dead of winter, and in the midst of the Christmas holiday vaca-

tion, must be regarded as a cause of vast importance and value"—so spoke the press after the sixth Student Volunteer Convention at Rochester four years ago. That this same cause called together more than five thousand students this year would indicate that its importance and value had increased in the last four years and would increase even more in the four years to come.

This growing cause mentioned is the making known of Jesus Christ to all mankind, by vitalizing the lives of the students of North America. The call of the convention was a call to you to make Christ real in your life and then, as a citizen of the world, to put that life in the place where it will be most useful.

As a school we will catch some of the fellowship that comes from mingling with other students throughout the country, we will feel ourselves a part of a world movement, and we will go from strength to greater strength because we have seen and have believed that God is working his purpose out and that we have a part in that purpose.

BALLAD CLUB

During the Christmas holidays some fruitful work was done by different students in collecting ballads and old songs at their homes. Miss Ruth Gleaves took down from the recitation of an old negro ex-slave an interesting version of "Barbara Allen," which is given below. The negro, whose name is Isaac Carrol, is about ninety years old. He says he learned this and many other old songs from his old "missus," a Mrs. Bell, of Wythe County, before the war.

BARBARA ALLEN

All in the month of May,
When the green buds they were swelling,
Sweet William was carried to his death bed
For the love of Barbara Allen.

Slowly he sent his servant on,
On into a dwelling;
My master's sick and very sick
For the love of Barbara Allen.

Slowly she got up,
Slowly she went on to him,
Slowly she drew the curtain down,
"Young man, I think you are dying.

"Don't you remember the other day
In the tavern you drank,
You drank your health to the ladies,
And slighted Barbara Allen?"

Slowly she got up,
Slowly she went on to him,
Slowly she drew the curtain down,
"Young man, I think you are dying."

"Oh, mother, oh, mother, go dig my grave,
Go dig it both long and narrow,
Sweet William died for me today,
And I'll die for him tomorrow."

One was buried in one church yard,
One was buried in the other.
Out of Sweet William's breast sprang a red rose,
And out of Barbara Allen's a briar.

They grew as high as the church,
And they could grow no higher,
They grew and tied in love bow-knots,
And the rose wrapped around the briar.

Another variant of the same ballad was brought in from Buckingham County by Miss Lily C. Maxey. She learned it from her father and other relatives. The two variants give an interesting example of the way the same old song may be changed in different localities.

BARBARA ALLEN

Early in the month of May,
The flowers, they were blooming.
Sweet William on his death bed lay
And sent for Barbara Allen.

He sent a servant to the town,
To the place where she was dwelling,
Saying, "Mistress, Mistress, will you go,
If your name be Barbara Allen?"

Slowly, slowly she got up,
And slowly she went to him,
And all she said when she got there
Was, "Young man, I think you're dying."

He turned his pale face towards the wall,
His back toward his darling.
Saying, "Adieu, adieu to all my friends,
But woe to Barbara Allen."

Slowly, slowly she got up
And slowly she went from him.
When she got into the town
She heard the church bells ringing.

"Mother, mother, make my bed,
Make it soft and narrow.
Sweet William died for me today,
I'll die for him tomorrow."

"Mother, mother, dig my grave,
Dig it deep and narrow.
Sweet William died for pure, pure love,
And I'll die for sorrow."

Sweet William was buried in a high-church yard,
And Barbara 'neath the tier.
On William's grave grew a red rose bush,
On Barbara's grew a briar.

They grew, they grew to the church steeple top,
They couldn't grow any higher.
And there they tied in a true lovers' knot,
The red rose and the briar.

A variant of "The Mermaid" (Child No. 289) has been reported to the Ballad Club by Mrs. J. M. Grainger, of Farmville, who remembers it from the singing of her father, Mr. Inslee Deadrick, of Knox County, Tenn.:

THE STORMY WINDS DO BLOW

'Twas Friday morn we all set sail,
And we were not far from land,
When all at once we espied a mermaid
With a comb and a glass in her hand,
In her hand,
With a comb and a glass in her hand.

Chorus:

The stormy winds do blow, blow, blow,
And the raging seas how they flow;
While we poor sailors are climbing to the top,
And the landsmen lying down below,
Down below,
And the landsmen lying down below.

Then up spoke the captain of that gallant ship,
And a right gallant captain was he:
"I've a father and mother in me own native land,
Who'll be watching and waiting for me,
For me,
Who'll be watching and waiting for me."

Chorus:

The stormy winds do blow, blow, blow, etc.

Then up spoke the bosun of that gallant ship,
And a right gallant bosun was he:
"I've a wife and a child in me own native land,
Who'll be watching and waiting for me,
For me,
Who'll be watching and waiting for me."

Chorus:

The stormy winds do blow, blow, blow, etc.

Then three times around went our gallant ship,
And three times around went she;
And the last time around she
And sank to the bottom of the sea,
Of the sea,
And sank to the bottom of the sea.

Chorus:

The stormy winds do blow, blow, blow, etc.

The following letter is quoted from a bulletin recently published by the United States Bureau of Education and sent to thousands of teachers throughout the country. It shows how important the government considers the work of ballad collecting. The bulletin to which this is introductory contains a statement about ballad collecting in America, by Dr. C. Alphonso Smith, a complete list of the ballads, with those which have been found in this country marked. It will be sent free to anyone who wants it.

AN OPPORTUNITY TO HELP IN AN IMPORTANT
WORK

Whatever has at any time appealed to the best emotions and moved the heart of a people must have for their children and their children's children political, historical, and cultural value. This is especially true of folk tales and folksongs.

The English and Scottish popular ballads given in the following lists helped to mould the character of the men and women who made up the larger part of the Colonial population of this country. For generations these ballads of the lowlands and highlands of English and Scotland were sung along the Atlantic coast and in the valleys of the Appalachian mountains. The descendants of English, Irish, and Scotch-Irish colonists took many of them with them on their march across the continent, and the ballads were familiar in childhood to millions of men and women whose children have never heard them. Before the march of the public school, the public library, urban civilization, and modern industrial and commercial life, they have vanished like fresh, cool mists of the morning before the heat of the sun, but they still have their value, and we should not permit them to be lost out of our life. The Nation will be the poorer if we do.

The Bureau of Education, therefore, welcomes the co-operation of Dr. C. Alphonso Smith, Edgar Allan Poe professor of English in the University of Virginia and founder and president of the Virginia Folk Lore Society, in collecting the American survivals of these ballads. The first step in this process is, as set forth by Dr. Smith in the following statement, to determine where any of these ballads or their variations are now to be found among the people.

May I therefore ask every person into whose hands a copy of this statement comes to read it carefully and then to fill out the inclosed blank and return it to me in the inclosed penalty envelope. This co-operation will be greatly appreciated and may result in saving to the Nation valuable treasures which otherwise would be lost.

Sincerely,

P. P. Claxton, *Commissioner.*

#	Hit or Miss	#
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WOMAN AND POET

I sing the blessings of poverty,
But them utterly fail to spy;
The uses sweet of adversity,
But I hope it will pass me by;
For poverty spurs to actions great,
But I do not need to be spurred;
And often adversity softens the heart
But I really think that's absurd!

I pity in verse the woman of wealth,
But wish often that I were she;
I say that the best of riches is health,
Some money with it for me!
For wealth is a burden to the soul,
But the burden I'd like to bear,
And health no money can ever buy,
But it does not free from care!

I sound the praise of humble fare,
But on good things I'd like to dine,
For the simple life I e'er declare
But I wish less simple were mine!
For humble fare yields the greatest strength,
But I know I can do with less,
And the simple life contentment means,
But I long to live well and dress!

Still thus I sing when I strike my lyre,
For in print it looks very fine.
It's the kind of fiction people like
But as fact would quickly decline.
If I did not praise such things I know,
That my verse would ne'er see the light,
The editors all would turn me down,
But privately say I was right!

Dr. Millidge—Do you believe the earth is round?

Girl—Yes.

Dr. M.—Prove it to me.

Girl (desperately)—Rather than have an argument I'll say it's square.

Mr. Coyner—When was the Revival of Learning?

Girl—Before last test.

Miss B. (in geography class)—What is the equator?

Second-year child—A menagerie lion running 'round the earth.

Conductor (to school girl returning after Christmas, new tan shoes and feet out in aisle)—Want your baggage checked, Miss?

May—What did John give you Christmas?

Jane—A beautiful mess bag.

“Fools who came to scoff, stayed to pray.”

Mr. G.—Parse the first pronoun.

Miss J. W.—Who—relative pronoun, masculine gender—

Mr. G.—Why?

Miss J. W.—Antecedent is *fools*.

Mrs. Nunn (to her little boy)—Joe Pete, I've invited some girls down here tonight and you must be nice, or you'll have to go to bed.

Joe Pete—Please let me go to bed, I'm afraid to take chances.

Mr. Lear—Why are an elephant and a shoe string alike?
Neither can climb a tree.

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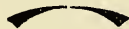
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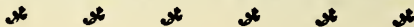
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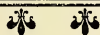
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